

14 July 2003

# COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

## CPA DAILY

**Text of statement issued by Iraqi interim Governing Council after its first meeting, in Baghdad on 13 July, read by Governing Council member Muhammad Bahr al-Ulum**

Peace be upon you, dear brothers and sisters. May God's peace and blessings be upon you. In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. We are honoured at these sensitive and complicated circumstances in the history of our country to announce to our homeland and the entire world the establishment of the transitional Governing Council, as an embodiment of the free national will of all Iraqis and in implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No 1483 to expedite the accomplishment of the tasks of the interim stage.

At this historic moment, we are eager to announce that the establishment of this council was the result of strenuous efforts exerted by Iraqi forces and figures of various affiliations and political trends, which have not stopped their consultations to reach the best possible formula so that this establishment might represent the components of the Iraqi people. This is done in consultation with the Coalition Provisional Authority and the representative of the UN Secretary-General. The council is representative of the makeup of the Iraqi people.

The establishment of this council is an expression of the national Iraqi will in the wake of the collapse of the former oppressive and dictatorial regime, thanks to the struggle and brave sacrifices of our people and the intervention of the international coalition forces.

However, the building of new Iraq shall remain among the first priorities of the good Iraqi people. It will require the participation of all Iraqis from all political and social trends who are willing to help accomplish this historic task.

Looking at the challenges of today, we believe that the most important priority of the council is to direct all of its efforts towards achieving security and stability in the country, revitalizing the national economy and providing public services. All this will be done through the establishment of a government with full functions and through the encouragement of the institutions of civil society.

Efforts must be exerted to complete the drafting of a permanent constitution that represents the will of the Iraqi people and paves the way for holding general elections and forming an effective government that enjoys full powers in a manner that restores sovereignty and independence to Iraq.

The tasks entrusted to the newly formed council are large and the responsibilities of its members cannot be underestimated. The old regime has wrought a comprehensive destruction of all the institutions of the state of Iraq and undermined all political, social, economic, and cultural aspects of Iraqi life. Rebuilding Iraq will require the greatest degree of cooperation and cohesion among members of the united people. We must give precedence to national interests over any considerations in order to rebuild a new Iraq whose people enjoy full rights under a unified democratic federal system. Peace be upon you. [applause]

Brothers and sisters I read to you the first resolution issued by the Governing Council in its opening session this morning:

1. Cancelling all official holidays associated with the deposed dictatorial regime and the dissolved [Arab Socialist] Ba'th Party.
2. 9 April, the day the regime fell, shall become a national day for Iraq and an official holiday

### Key Messages – Political Process

This past weekend, Iraq's new Governing Council was formed. This is a momentous step. The launch of the Governing Council means that Iraqis will now play a more central role in running their country.

The Governing Council will be an interim body. A body to ensure that all Iraqis' views are properly represented in this interim period.

The Governing Council will -- for the first time in Iraq's history -- bring together a balanced representative group of political leaders from across the country. It will represent the diversity of Iraq: whether they are Shi'a or Sunni, Arab or Kurd, Baghdadi or Basrawi, man or woman, all Iraqis will see themselves represented on this Council.

The Governing Council will be involved in all significant decisions the Iraqi Government and the Coalition take in the months ahead. The Council will name the new Ministers to lead Iraq's Ministries. And its members will be able to represent Iraq internationally. It will determine the budget for next year.

One of the Governing Council's first jobs will be to help launch the constitutional process. The constitution will be written by Iraqis and for Iraqis. It will not be written by the Coalition. Once the constitution is written, the Iraqi people will have an opportunity to approve it, and then hold elections for a sovereign government.

### Key Quotes:

The people who are trying to attack the successes of the Iraqi people, as they did for the 30 years prior, are simply not going to succeed.

And this new governing council, which declared today that a new Iraqi holiday is going to be the day of liberation, the day that the statue came down, this is now an extremely important phase for the Iraqi people.

They're going to succeed. We're going to help them succeed, and these old-line remnants of the Saddam Hussein regime are going to be swept away.

**Condoleezza Rice**, 13 July 2003

The people of Iraq have taken a momentous step towards the goal of an Iraq run by Iraqis for Iraqis. The Governing Council will be the core of the Iraqi interim administration. This delivers a key part of UN Security Council Resolution 1483.

**Jack Straw**, 13 July 2003